

# WALTHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY TENANT INSTRUCTIONS AND INFO SHEET

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**WELCOME TO THE WALTHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY!**



Welcome to the **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** community!

We are delighted to have you as part of our community. This guide is designed to help make your tenancy at WHA a positive experience and to ensure your time here is enjoyable and hassle-free.

At WHA, we are committed to providing a safe, comfortable, and welcoming environment for all residents. If you ever need assistance or have questions, our dedicated staff is always here to support you.

Thank you for choosing the Waltham Housing Authority. We look forward to serving you for many years to come!

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## **APARTMENT CONDITION AT LEASE-UP AND DURING TENANCY**

Apartments at the **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** are rented and leased in their present condition, as shown at the time of occupancy.

Permanent alterations to the unit are **not permitted** under the terms of your lease agreement. Any proposed changes or modifications must receive **prior written approval from WHA** before any work is performed.

At move-in, WHA provides a **Move-In Inspection Report** to document cosmetic defects (i.e., normal wear and tear only). This report:

- Identifies any pre-existing cosmetic issues at the time of move-in
- Helps prevent discrepancies at move-out
- Distinguishes between prior wear and tear and any new damage at move-out

Unit or building alterations before or during tenancy are strictly prohibited without the express written permission of WHA.

## **ELECTRICAL**

The **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** provides the following electrical guidance for your safety and convenience:

### **GFI Outlets (Kitchen & Bathroom)**

Ground Fault Interrupter (GFI) outlets are installed in kitchen and bathroom areas. If an outlet is not working or appears to be tripped, press the **“RESET”** button to restore power.

### **Wall Outlets & Light Switch Controls**

If certain outlets in a room are not working, try flipping the room’s light switch(es). In some units, specific outlets are controlled by a wall switch to power lamps or other plugged-in devices.

### **Tamper-Resistant Outlets**

Some outlets have protective safety covers inside the prong openings. You may need to apply slightly more pressure when inserting a plug so the internal safety cover slides back and allows full insertion.

### **Electric Stove Burners**

- Do **not** remove burners from the socket.
- Keep grease off burners.
- Clean drip pans without removing the burners.
- **Do not place tin foil on drip pans — this is a fire hazard.**

### **Fire Safety Recommendation**

WHA strongly recommends that tenants purchase and maintain a fire extinguisher as a safety precaution.

### **Avoid Overloading Circuits**

Do not overload outlets, as this may trip circuit breakers. If breakers trip:

- Disconnect some items completely, or
- Plug them into a separate electrical circuit.

### **Light Bulbs (Family Units)**

Residents in Family Units are responsible for replacing standard light bulbs that are commercially available over the counter.

### **Power Outages**

If you rely on healthcare equipment (such as supplemental oxygen or other essential medical devices), it is strongly advised that you have a battery backup system in place in case of a power outage.

## **FIRE ALARMS, SAFETY DEVICES, AND FLAMMABLE ITEMS**

The **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** is committed to maintaining a safe living environment for all residents. Please carefully follow these safety guidelines:

### **Fire Alarms & Safety Devices**

Fire alarms, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, sprinklers, and other safety devices must **not** be tampered with, disabled, or removed for any reason. Tampering with life-safety equipment is against the law and may result in lease violations and legal action.

### **Flammable Materials**

Gasoline or other flammable fuels and chemicals are **not permitted** inside apartments or buildings. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to:

- Generators
- Motor vehicles
- Propane tanks
- Gasoline containers
- Any highly flammable fuel or chemical

### **Sprinkler Systems**

Sprinkler heads and pipes are extremely delicate and must not be touched, cleaned, or tampered with.

- Do **not** hang items from sprinkler pipes or heads.
- Maintain at least **18–24 inches of clearance** in all directions from sprinkler heads.

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## **HEATING, THERMOSTATS, AND AIR CONDITIONING**

### **Space Heaters**

Space heaters are **not allowed**, unless they are oil-filled models. Approved oil-filled heaters must be placed at least **15 feet away from any thermostat** and used in accordance with the manufacturer's safety instructions. Please refer to the space heater safety instruction sheet for additional guidance.

### **Heating Systems & Thermostats**

Tampering with the heating system or thermostats is strictly prohibited. Tenants will be charged for any damage in accordance with their lease agreement.

### **Clearance Requirements**

- Furniture and personal items must be kept at least **12 inches** away from heating elements.
- Curtains must be kept at least **18 inches** away from heating elements.

### **Window Air Conditioning Units**

Window air conditioning units are the responsibility of the tenant. Tenants are responsible for purchasing, safely installing, maintaining, repairing, replacing, and removing units at the beginning of the heating season (typically October 1).

## **PLUMBING / APPLIANCES**

The **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** provides the following plumbing and appliance guidelines to help prevent damage and ensure safe operation:

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### **Washing Machine Valves**

Washing machine shut-off valves must be **tested before removing a washer**:

1. Close the valve.
2. Attempt to run the washing machine.
3. If water still fills the machine, the **valve is faulty**.

**⚠ Do NOT attempt to remove a hose while it is still charged (on) with water.** This can cause significant flooding and damage.

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### **Laundry Use**

Laundry detergent may only be used in designated, permanently installed washing machines.

- Washing clothes in tubs using laundry soap is **not permitted**.

- Apartment plumbing systems are not designed to handle excessive soap suds.
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### **Drain & Plumbing Care**

The following items must **never** go down drains:

- Grease or cooking oils
- Food scraps
- Paper towels
- Wipes (including “flushable” wipes)

Portable plumbing appliances or unauthorized fixtures may **not** be connected to sinks, bathtubs, or other plumbing fixtures.

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### **Stoves & Appliances**

Stoves and appliances should be cleaned regularly for hygiene and fire safety.

- Do **not** cover drip pans with foil.
  - Keep burners and surrounding areas free of grease buildup.
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### **Gas Stoves (If Applicable)**

If your unit has a gas stove:

- Ensure burners light immediately when turned on.
  - If they do not light, **turn the knob off immediately**.
  - After cooking, confirm all knobs are fully turned off and gas is not flowing.
  - Use pots and pans that match the size of the burner.  
Oversized pans can produce excess carbon monoxide (CO).
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### **Toilets (Family Units)**

Residents in Family Units should attempt to unclog toilets themselves **without flushing repeatedly**.

 Do **not** continue flushing if the toilet is clogged. Repeated flushing will cause the bowl to overflow and may result in water damage.

If a clog cannot be cleared safely, contact management for assistance.

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## **MAINTENANCE APPOINTMENTS AND WORK ORDERS**

The **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** encourages all tenants to promptly report maintenance and extermination issues to prevent escalation and reduce potential damage to your unit.

### **Reporting Maintenance**

- Tenants should report all maintenance and extermination requests **immediately**.
- Prompt reporting helps prevent emergencies and additional property damage.

### **Permission to Enter**

- All maintenance requests are considered **automatic permission to enter** unless you specifically request to be present.
- For standard work orders, maintenance staff **do not schedule appointments** in advance.

### **Technician Attempts**

- The technician will attempt entry **two separate times** by knocking on your unit door.
- If the tenant is not home during these attempts, the work order may be **canceled**.

### **Cable/Phone Installation Requests**

- Must be scheduled on workdays between **8:00 AM–11:00 AM** and **1:00 PM–3:00 PM**.
- Appointments must be made **48 hours in advance** with the Maintenance office.

## **PARKING**

Parking on **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** properties is **at the discretion of WHA** and is **not guaranteed** to tenants. Please follow these rules carefully to avoid fines or towing:

### **Tenant Vehicles**

- Must display a **visible WHA parking sticker** in a clear window (not under tint).
- Vehicles must be **operable**, have **current registration**, and a **valid Massachusetts safety inspection**.

### **Restricted Vehicles**

- Out-of-state vehicles, visitor cars, or rental vehicles **without a temporary parking pass** are **not allowed** in tenant parking spaces and may be towed.

### **Visitor Parking**

- Some properties provide designated visitor parking.
- **Overnight parking** for visitors is generally **not permitted** without a proper pass.
- Always refer to posted **visitor parking signs** for specific rules.

For detailed information, consult the WHA parking regulations to ensure compliance and avoid penalties.

## **TRASH**

The **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** has strict guidelines for trash and furniture disposal to comply with Massachusetts law and maintain clean, safe properties:

### **Mattresses & Box Springs**

- **Cannot** be thrown in trash areas or dumpsters.
- Call the **WHA Maintenance Department** to arrange proper pickup if your furniture store does not dispose of them.

### **Trash Containers**

- All trash must be placed **inside barrels with lids firmly closed** or fully inside dumpsters.
- Excess trash left outside containers may be **searched**, and tenants will be **charged for removal**.
- Refer to the **trash schedule** and the **City of Waltham website** for information on acceptable items in trash and recycling bins.

### **Furniture Disposal**

- During cleanouts, move-outs, or unit transfers, **tenants are responsible** for disposing of furniture.
- Furniture **must not** be left in common or communal areas of any WHA property.

## **CLEANING OF UNITS**

At the **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)**, tenants are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of their units to ensure a safe and healthy living environment:

### **General Cleaning**

- Tenants are responsible for **all cleaning** within their unit, including ceiling vents and removing dead insects after extermination.

### **Propane Grills**

- Only **propane grills** are permitted.

- Grills must be used **at least 25 feet from any structure**.
- Ensure the grill is **cooled down** before storing it near the building.
- **Propane valves must be turned off** before storage.

### **Bathrooms & Exhaust Fans**

- Tenants must keep bathrooms clean and maintain **exhaust fans free of dust or obstructions**.

Maintaining these standards helps prevent damage, hazards, and ensures compliance with WHA rules.

### **VISITORS AND COMMON AREAS**

The **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** sets clear rules to maintain safety and order for all residents:

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#### **Visitors**

- Visitors are allowed **until 10:00 PM**.
  - **Overnight stays** are only permitted in accordance with WHA lease restrictions.
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#### **Common Area Storage**

- Tenants **may not store personal items** in hallways, means of egress, or other unauthorized areas.
  - Only items **authorized by a separate WHA notice** may be stored outside the unit.
  - Refer to the official **WHA notice** for details on approved storage.
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#### **Swimming Pools**

- **Swimming pools are not allowed** on WHA property.
- Tenants and visitors are encouraged to use the **City of Waltham's water spray parks and recreational facilities** during the summer months.

### **SNOW REMOVAL**

The **Waltham Housing Authority (WHA)** provides guidance to ensure safety and proper snow management on its properties:

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## **Safety During Snow Events**

- Residents and visitors are encouraged to **stay indoors unless absolutely necessary** during snowstorms.
  - If possible, wait until **snow and ice removal of walkways** has been completed.
  - WHA manages snow removal across **23 properties** in a pre-determined sequence; please be patient while crews complete their work.
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## **Tenant Responsibilities**

### **Parking Spaces & Vehicles**

- Tenants are responsible for **removing snow from their own cars and individual parking spaces or driveways**.
- Do **not** shovel snow from your space into another tenant's parking area.
- Snow should be moved to **landscaped areas**.
- Cleaning cars and the area around parking spaces during heavy snowfall is recommended to prevent accumulation from freezing and creating hazards.

### **Unit Landings, Stairs, & Basement Steps**

- Tenants are responsible for clearing **unit-specific landing stoops, stairs, and basement steps** that they use for entering or exiting their units.
  - WHA provides snow removal only for **common walkways** that serve all residents.
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## **Restrictions**

- No contractors, outside persons, or equipment are allowed to conduct **snow removal** on WHA properties without authorization.
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## **Reporting Injuries or Hazards**

- If anyone suffers a **slip or fall** during snow or ice events:
    1. Fill out a **WHA incident report immediately**.
    2. Take **photo documentation** showing the area, date, and time.
    3. Submit the report for investigation by WHA.
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Please refer to your **lease agreement** and **WHA's Rules and Regulations** for additional details regarding snow removal responsibilities and safety procedures.